



Your Taxes and Financial Matters

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Remembering † Wanda Tomczykowska

With great sadness we note the passing of another great ambassador of Polish culture in California. Wanda Tomczykowska—a tireless and dedicated individual and an exceedingly warm and welcoming human being — died in Kraków, Poland, on 2 March 2010 following a very long illness.

She was born in Nowy Bytom in the province of Silesia on 29 August 1921. Her father, Leon Krawczyk, was a well-known theatre director and actor who in his youth was involved in the political movement that resulted in Silesia becoming a province of Poland after World War I. Wanda was educated in the Teachers' College in Myslowice and received her diploma in 1939. Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, she was taken hostage for her father's political activities and deported to Germany. She spent the war years in Berlin, first working as a servant for a family of a prominent German industrialist and his Polish wife, who later "adopted" her to save her life. At that time Wanda also attended a business college, receiving a diploma in 1944. Also in Berlin she met Zygmunt Tomczykowski, a Polish-American soldier in the US Army stationed in Germany. They were married in Berlin in 1946 and a year later travelled back to Boston with their newborn daughter, Caria.

Wanda's lifelong involvement with the Polish-American community began as soon as she arrived on the East Coast. She assisted wartime refugees from Europe, organized a folk dance group at St. Michael's Parish in Lynn, Massachusetts, and participated in numerous local charitable initiatives. After her husband's death in 1950, Wanda moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, and began working at Harvard, both at the Widener Library and other smaller departmental libraries on campus. Wanda's professional activities also included reporting for *Dziennik dla wszystkich* [Journal for All Readers] in Buffalo, NY during the late 1940s and working as lexicographer for the US Air Force in the early 1950s. Fluent in Polish, German and English, throughout her life Wanda served as translator and interpreter for the US State Department and a variety of organizations on the East and West coasts.

In the mid 1950s Wanda moved to Berkeley, California, and took a position in the Slavic Acquisitions Department at the Main Library of UC Berkeley. In the Bay Area Wanda continued her enthusiastic advocacy for a variety of international programs, and served on the advisory boards of the International Institute, the Commonwealth Club, and World Affairs Council, among others. She helped establish the Polish University Club and facilitated scholarly exchanges between the UC Berkeley and Polish universities under the Ford Foundation Fellowship program.

The Polish Arts and Culture Foundation [PACF] of San Francisco was her proudest and most notable achievement. Wanda Tomczykowska founded it in 1966 to commemorate the one thousand years of Poland's history and opened it on May 3, 1966, honoring the anniversary of Poland's 1791 Constitution. With her usual zeal and passion, Wanda organized countless exhibits under the auspices of the PACF on several campuses, libraries, churches, and department stores throughout the Bay Area, covering subjects such as Poland's history, art, culture, science, and everyday life. Wanda also organized lectures and symposia, provided local radio stations with ideas on programming Polish music, supervised

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Polonia at its Best!

By: **Dariusz Zakrzewski**

In times like these, where good news is no news and we are flooded with filth of every imaginable kind, by sheer volume trying to impress upon us, that this is, what this world is like and all about, positive examples are so very important. Despite cynicism and attempts to kill off hope, we are bombarded with, through much of the media, awareness of good, present in our world shines through and offers encouragement.

One truly fine example, we were recently given to cherish, was the visit of Sister Bogumiła (Zofia) Zamora, (CSFN) of the Congregation of the Holy Family of Nazareth from Komancza, - Poland. Her six weeks long pilgrimage to Polonia of North America, with an important message and testimony, has taken her from parishes in New York and New Jersey to Phoenix, Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Jose, San Francisco, Chicago and Toronto, in what proved to be an amazing spiritual experience for so many!

The reception she received is a topic to ponder. Polonia after all is very diversified. That diversity reflected in the degree local coordinators were able to flock people together for the documentary film showings and meetings with her. Those that attended can attest that they were privileged to partake in something of great significance. The subject matter: "Spiritual Heritage of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński" was meant to be a preparation for next year's 30 anniversary of his death and the awaited beatification. Sister brought back to those among us that were living in Poland those difficult days, memories of a great Polish hero that like Moses led our Nation across the "Red Sea" of Communism.

During her visit to the US and Canada, Sister was a guest speaker at twelve radio stations, three television stations, interviewed and written about in "Nowy Dziennik" in NY, News of Polonia, Kurier, Dziennik Związkowy, Katolik and "Polonia" in Chicago, Goniec in Toronto and other publications across the country. Information of her visit, meetings and the purpose of her coming, appeared on well known web pages like www.NY.pl, www.RadioPomost.com, www.azpolonia.com, www.poloniasf.org, www.poloniasacramento.com and others. Current information were also accessible at Sisters of Nazareth own website www.nazaretanki.dir.pl in Komancha.

A brilliant (TVP) documentary (courtesy of Polish Television): "Non Possumus" directed by Pawel Woldan, was presented Polonia usually a week before Sister's visit in parishes across the country. Her visit revolved around Polish churches but included visits to Polish schools, wherever possible, Polish senior centers, Veteran's organizations, Radio Maryja Family and other cultural centers where Polonia life thrives. Noticeably absent was the Polish American Congress that showed no interest. Many private visits at homes of guest friendly members of Polonia, allowed Sister Bogumiła to experience first-hand the diversity of Polonian life in all its glory and problems. Real life stories so different yet all drawn by the mystical bond that being Polish offers.

In all the parishes that granted her forum, Sister was received with love and respect that partly was a tribute to her effort and testimony and partly out of reverence for unforgettable Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, for whom she clearly is an emissary. She was touched by friendly reception of priests and nuns, some of whom offered her accommodations to get a chance to get to know her better and give their parishioners better access to her. Thus, she stayed for two days at the Polish Parish of our Lady of Częstochowa at the

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Variable Annuities: Strategies to Recover Retirement Income

The past 18 months have been difficult for the financial markets—and for retirement investors. Many investors, especially those approaching or already in retirement, are seeking ways to add the potential for stability to their portfolios and to help protect their retirement incomes. One approach that has proven attractive for many of our clients is the variable annuity. A well-structured annuity is designed toward recovering and protecting retirement income by helping to reduce retirement income risk.

When it comes to retirement planning, there are three main risks to a sustainable income:

Investment risk—All investors have experienced the ups and downs of market cycles, but these fluctuations can be particularly problematic in the years just before and just after retirement. The ability to generate a lifetime income from retirement can depend greatly on when you start to take income and, specifically, on the sequence of your returns. Negative returns early in retirement have more impact, and when returns eventually turn positive, it takes longer to make up the losses caused by the initial declines.

Longevity risk—The risk of outliving your retirement savings. Thanks to advances in science and medicine, life expectancies—and the length of the average retirement—have increased by 20 years. And if both you and your spouse reach age 65, there is 52% chance that one of you will live to be 90. (Source: Society of Actuaries, 2006.) As a result, without careful planning, the risk increases significantly that you may outlive your retirement savings. Income must be able to sustain lifestyle needs for much longer, while also covering health care, housing and other costs for an extended period of time.

Inflation risk—Inflation erodes the purchasing power of your income and wealth. And it doesn't stop just because you have retired. Of particular concern in any retirement income plan is the cost of health care, which is rising far more rapidly than the cost of living. During the past eight years, while inflation was pushing prices up by about 20%, the cost of health care more than doubled.*

Seeking a Solution

The one tool to address these risks would accomplish three things:

Provide investment risk protection by helping to assure a predictable level of income, regardless of market conditions

Eliminate longevity risk by generating a guaranteed flow of retirement income that cannot be outlived

Combat inflation by allowing you to access the upside of the equity market and lock in gains to increase potential retirement income

In the past, it was possible to address these risks individually by combining multiple types of investment products, but it was almost impossible to effectively reduce all risks with a single investment vehicle. Today, however, new annuity designs integrate a range of features and benefits that make it possible to deal with all three risks.

The Flexibility of Variable Annuities

A variable annuity is a contract between an individual and an insurance company that provides lifetime payments, beginning either immediately or at some future date. A long-term investment vehicle, it is designed to help protect

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Missing a W-2?

Accept no substitute.

Fortunately, you can forget that slogan when events like natural disasters or bankruptcies cause your employer to neglect issuing your W-2. The IRS will accept a substitute in situations that leave you unable to obtain year-end wage statements.

What to do. First, make an attempt to get your W-2 by contacting your employer. You can also ask the IRS to do the nudging for you.

If those remedies fail, your next step is to complete Form 4852, *Substitute for Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement*.

What you'll need. Since Form 4852 is a replacement for your W-2, you'll need the same information shown on that statement, including your employer's name, address, and federal identification number. You can estimate your 2009 wages and withholdings, using pay stubs or another reasonable method.

What else to do. Consider waiting until April to file your return. That way you avoid having to prepare an amended return if you do receive the actual W-2 and it differs from your estimate.

If you have to use Form 4852, mark your calendar to check next year's annual social security estimate of your potential future benefit. You'll want to be sure the wages are included in the "earnings record" portion of the statement.

Take a closer look at Form 1099-R

Forms 1099-R arrive in your mailbox this time of year, taxing reminders of your retirement account decisions during 2009. Right there, in box one, is the total amount you withdrew from your pension, annuity, IRA, or other retirement plan.

But before you enter that figure as income on your federal tax return, it may pay to review your reasons for the withdrawal, especially in the case of IRA distributions.

For instance, if you took money from a traditional IRA in which you have basis, the taxable portion will be less than the gross distribution reported on Form 1099-R. You account for the difference on Form 8606, "Nondeductible IRAs."

Qualified charitable contributions made directly from your IRA may also reduce the taxable amount of the distributions shown on Form 1099-R. In this case, you indicate the reason for the difference on the first page of Form 1040 with the notation "QCD."

Did you roll part or all of the distribution you received into another qualified IRA? As long as you made only one transfer during the past twelve months, and did so within the statutory 60-day time period, the amount rolled over is tax-free. Notify the IRS that you qualify for this exception by entering "Rollover" on page one of Form 1040.

Other IRA distributions reported on Form 1099-R may require additional action during 2010. For example, you may want to "undo" last year's Roth conversion.

Did you receive Form 1099-C?

What is that mystery form?

If you borrowed money that your lender says you no longer have to repay, you may have received a tax information statement you've never seen before. Form 1099-C, which lenders send to you and to the IRS, shows the amount of the cancelled debt, an amount that may be taxable income to you.

Or maybe not, depending on the type of debt cancelled.

For instance, under present federal law, debt forgiven on loan proceeds you used

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